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Leaflet Regarding Rules of Publication.—CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE has prepared a leaflet explaining its rules regarding publication. This leaflet gives suggestions on the preparation of manuscripts and of illustrations. It is suggested that contributors to this Journal write to its office requesting a copy of this leaflet.

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EDITORIALS†

CALIFORNIA'S BASIC SCIENCE INITIATIVE

Initiative Petitions Now Being Circulated.—

It is hoped that by the end of October every physician and dentist who holds membership in a county or district society will have received a copy of the Basic Science Initiative that will be submitted to the voters of California at the next state election—in November, 1942.*

* * *

Total of 212,117 Valid Signatures Required.—

For preliminary consideration, the proposed law is referred to the medical and dental professions in petition form, because petitions containing a total of more than 212,117 validated signatures of properly registered voters must be presented to the Secretary of State before the contemplated law can be placed on the state election ballot. Through the cooperation of physicians and dentists, it is hoped that the expenditure for securing the necessary signatures will be greatly reduced. Only petitions and signatures that have been properly validated and signed can be used; and since the cost of securing signatures through commercial distributors approximates about 12 cents per name, the margin of almost 300,000 signatures that will be required to insure its acceptance by the Secretary of State, would mean an outlay of California Medical Association funds amounting to between thirty and forty thousand dollars! If physicians and surgeons, therefore, either themselves, or through properly certified office assistants, will obtain signatures from patients and friends, it should be possible to secure most of the names required without resorting to expensive commercial company circulators.†

In cooperation with the Public Health League of California, the petitions are now going forward to members of the medical and dental professions, and it is hoped that real progress will have been made in acquiring the needed signatures before the year 1941 comes to a close.

* * *

History of Basic Science Law Legislation.—

For members who have not followed the history of

† Editorials on subjects of scientific and editorial interest, contributed by members of the California Medical Association, are printed in the Editorial Comment column which follows.

* For references to progress reports from Committee on Public Health Education concerning the proposed law, see the issues of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE for July, page 45; August, page 96; and September, page 151.

† Read carefully the instructions and cautions on the back of the petition regarding circulators and circulation.

the Basic Science Law activities in California, and who may wish to check and be informed thereon, a list of references to basic science articles that have appeared in CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE, was given in the August issue, on page 104.

It is a source of gratification to know that California, one of the "multiple healing art board states," now bids fair to join the fifteen commonwealths and the District of Columbia, which already carry such a law on their statute books. The first state to enact a similar measure was Connecticut, in the year 1925, two years before California's agitation for a Basic Science Law began. The states which possess basic science laws, with years of enactment of their statutes, include: Arizona, 1936; Arkansas, 1929; Colorado, 1937; Connecticut, 1925; District of Columbia, 1929; Florida, 1939; Iowa, 1935; Michigan, 1937; Minnesota, 1927; Nebraska, 1927; Oklahoma, 1937; Oregon, 1933; Rhode Island, 1940; South Dakota, 1939; Washington, 1927; Wisconsin, 1925.

* * *

How Basic Science Laws in Other States Have Worked.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association*, on page 2052 of its issue of May 3, 1941, gave a brief discussion of basic science law statistics, from which the following figures are taken:

1. Statistics for years 1927-1940, inclusive, for all Basic Science Boards reveal the following:

(a) *Re: Physicians or Medical Students Examined:*

Total examined, 11,814; passed, 10,401; failed, 1,413; percentage failed, 12.0; endorsement, 2,583; total certified, 12,984.

(b) *Re: Other Healing Art Practitioners Examined:*

Total examined, 1,429; passed, 674; failed, 755; percentage failed, 52.8; endorsement, 407; total certified, 1,081.

Further comment on the tables submitted in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* article referred to, follows:

Five boards functioning in 1927 examined 305 physicians or medical students, of whom 26, 8.5 per cent, failed and 22 other practitioners, of whom 7, or 31.8 per cent, failed. In 1940, by comparison, 1,639 were certified. During the fourteen-year period a total of 12,984 physicians were examined, of whom 10,401 passed and 1,413, 12.0 per cent, failed and 1,429 other practitioners, of whom 52.8 per cent failed. During this period, 2,583 physicians were certified without examination, while only 407 other practitioners were so registered.

Altogether, 14,065 certificates have been issued by basic science boards since 1927, of whom 12,984 were granted to physicians and 1,081 to other practitioners. During this fourteen-year period, 11,814 physicians or medical students were examined, of whom 10,401 were registered, and 1,429 other practitioners were examined, 674 of whom received certificates. During this fourteen-year period, also 2,583 physicians and 407 others received certificates by examination, reciprocity and endorsement.

From the high percentage of failures in the other practitioner group, it seems apparent that the enforcement of basic science laws affects mostly this group. The object of such laws is to provide a means of insuring that all candidates seeking the right to care for sick and injured people shall first possess a reasonable knowledge of the sciences fundamental to the healing art.

Comment with Reference to California Conditions.—The above figures should convince any physician that a Basic Science Law is a real aid in preventing the licensure of persons who do not possess an adequate amount of preliminary or prehealing-art education. For instance, in California, the chiropractors, through their board, have licensed since 1922, about 4,000 practitioners belonging to that group. For the same period, the number of osteopathic licentiates is 1,834, of which 1,335 are "osteopathic physicians and surgeons." If the naturopathic group, whose leaders for years have been seeking recognition through a separate board, were to be given legal recognition in California, the chiropractic experience of a massive number of licentiates in a limited time period would probably be duplicated, if not increased! However, with a basic science law in operation in California, it would be possible for a separate Naturopathic Board to grant licenses only to those members of that group who, in addition to possessing the professional requirements laid down in the law for their group, presented with their applications for examination, certificates previously secured from the Basic Science Board. The basic science requirement would apply to the naturopathic, naprapathic or any other sectarian group that may come forward in the future with request for legal recognition by the State of California. The basic science law would apply to all such in the same fashion as it pertained to doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathy and doctors of chiropractic.

No legislative action could evade this requirement, because the Basic Science Act, if once enacted as an initiative law, would then partake of the nature of a constitutional amendment, and all legislative acts pertaining thereto would be required to conform to its fundamental provisions.

* * *

Coöperation in Circulating Petitions Is Important.—In conclusion, on behalf of all those who have labored either in the cultivation of opinion or in the drafting of a Basic Science Law for California, may not the hope be expressed that every physician and dentist in the State will appreciate the importance of the issues at stake, and do his part in having his own office return to headquarters, at an early day, one or more petitions with properly validated names?

Keep in mind that the securing of such names is in itself an element that will make for wider interest, with a larger number of supporters and advocates when the time for voting on the initiative approaches. In other words, the circulation at this time of signature petitions by physicians, dentists and their friends, will make for a better guarantee that California will place the proposed Basic Science Law on its statute books in November, 1942.

NEW MEETING-ROOM PAVILION AT DEL MONTE: FOR 1942 ANNUAL SESSION

Increasing Difficulty in Finding Adequate Accommodations.—Where to find accommodations of sufficient amount and proper kind to care for the increasing needs of the California Medical